

Southeast Seattle Action Agenda UPDATE

November
2005

MAYOR'S COMMITMENT TO THE SOUTHEAST SEATTLE COMMUNITY



"We will work with the residents and businesses in Southeast Seattle to support their hard work and community vision."

MAYOR GREG NICKELS

COMMUNITY VISION

Southeast Seattle is a vibrant community where: racial, cultural and economic diversity is embraced and preserved; immigrants are welcomed; all residents have access to economic and educational opportunities, housing, and cultural and recreational amenities; and the economic benefits generated by public and private investments are shared with current residents, businesses and community institutions.

OVERVIEW

The City is committed to ensuring the Southeast Seattle community benefits from the significant investments coming from the Sound Transit Light Rail and Seattle Housing Authority projects. During the summer and fall of 2004, Mayor Greg Nickels convened a group of community and business leaders, community-based organizations and public and private sector organizations to discuss potential strategies for the revitalization of Southeast Seattle. "The Southeast Seattle Community Development Action Agenda" is a direct result of those community-led, City-staffed meetings.



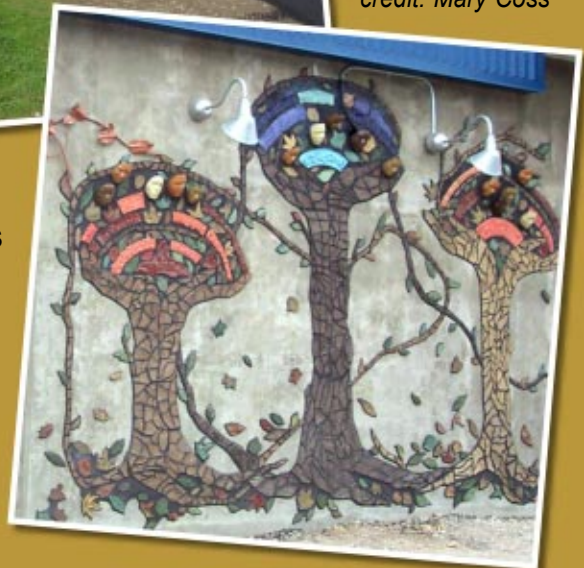
NewHolly housing development
credit: Seattle Housing Authority



Rainier Court mixed-use development



A finished section of the Chief Sealth Trail



Mosaic at Katherine's Place
credit: Mary Coss



City of Seattle
Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

NOVEMBER 2005

Business & Job Creation

Support existing businesses throughout the Rainier Valley and encourage investment in new business to: (1) preserve the multi-ethnic mix of local entrepreneurs; (2) provide opportunities for them to benefit from the increased economic activity that will result from the substantial public and private investment planned for the area; and (3) diversify and increase the availability of retail goods, services and jobs within the Rainier Valley.

Business & Job Creation Accomplishments:

- Rainier Valley Community Development Fund (RVCDF) approved \$7.2 million funds for disbursement to assist a total of 119 businesses in the Rainier Valley as of October, 2005
- Developed and initiated \$20,000 marketing campaign to promote Rainier Valley businesses
- City and Sound Transit approved the RVCDF's community development program to provide loans to businesses
- Funded 7 façade improvement projects totaling a \$94,000 investment, and increased the amounts available per project for the façade improvement program
- Provided technical assistance to business owners with limited English, regarding environmentally friendly practices. Distributed Spill Kits to 130 business owners
- Launched wireless Internet access ("Wi-Fi") pilot project in Columbia City
- SEED rehabilitated the Washington Care Center, resulting in the expansion of nursing home services and the retention of nearly 200 jobs in the community

Highlights of Community's Next Priorities:

- Complete initial phases of marketing campaign by the spring of 2006
- Establish the RVCDF's policies and procedures to deliver new business loan products, and conduct outreach to inform Rainier Valley businesses of the loan products
- Create integrated façade improvement program, administered by SEED, with City and RVCDF funds to target specific areas and achieve maximum impact
- Study Wi-Fi pilot project to determine long term benefits and usefulness in expanding access to other business districts



Business owners view façade improvement renderings

Mayor launches Wi-Fi pilot project in Columbia City



Mixed-use construction near Rainier Court

Opening of Katherine's Place

Physical Development

Promote opportunities for housing, commercial, mixed-use and transit-oriented developments that benefit the people who live and work in the Rainier Valley, while at the same time preserve the unique characteristics of existing neighborhoods and their racial, cultural and economic diversity.

Physical Development Accomplishments:

- City and Sound Transit approved the Rainier Valley Community Development Fund's (RVCDF) community development program to help finance commercial and housing development
- Five City-funded rental housing projects containing 478 units are completed or under construction
- SHA's NewHolly redevelopment nearly completed and Rainier Vista well underway
- Increased marketing of first-time homebuyer opportunities in Spanish and other languages
- Established and publicized priority permit review process for the SE Seattle Reinvestment Area (SESRA) to expedite permitting for SE Seattle projects
- Prepared legislation allowing 'detached' accessory dwelling units in SE Seattle
- Proposed changes to land use and zoning regulations in neighborhood commercial areas to improve pedestrian and transit orientation, support job creation, enhance housing opportunities, and maintain compatibility with surrounding residential areas

Highlights of Community's Next Priorities:

- Complete development of affordable rental and ownership units at SHA's Rainier Vista and SEED's Rainier Court development projects
- Initiate mixed-use, mixed-income development of the light rail station areas
- Address parking needs of neighborhood business districts and light rail station areas
- Develop additional financial tools for affordable housing and economic development

Education & Workforce:

Develop a “world class” Pre-K through 20 public and private educational, workforce education and training, and human service delivery systems that meets the needs of the business community and the area’s youth and adult workforce.

Education & Workforce Accomplishments:

- Placed 43 workers in construction-related jobs through the RVCDF’s Pre-Apprenticeship Program
- Started many programs funded through the Families & Education Levy, which all aim to improve academic achievement:
 - *Seattle Team for Youth*, an intensive case management program for middle and high school youth, currently has four agencies in SE Seattle working with six SE middle and high schools
 - *Seattle Early Learning Network (ELN)*:
 - has established eight new Step Ahead Preschools for four-year-olds in SE Seattle; free for families that meet income guidelines
 - will create two Parent-Child-Home Programs in SE Seattle
 - will provide kindergarten transition assistance to ELN members starting this Fall
 - will provide curriculum training and quality assurance for ELN members
 - Established three elementary school Community Learning Centers in SE Seattle
 - Established two Middle School Innovation sites at Aki Kurose and Asa Mercer middle schools
 - Gave six SE Seattle elementary schools \$10,000 grants for family involvement programs
 - Installed Family Support Workers in seventeen SE Seattle elementary schools
 - Located three school-based health centers in SE Seattle schools at Aki Kurose, Franklin and Rainier Beach
- Funded eight neighborhood organizations with \$84,714 of Neighborhood Matching Funds to undertake community driven educational projects, including one that will expand the membership of the Ethiopian Business Association
- Convened monthly a group of service providers and school representatives to develop and implement strategies to improve human delivery systems to SE youth & families
- Using Rainier Beach as a pilot, the following activities are occurring:
 - Developing and implementing strategies to enhance youth and families’ knowledge of available resources and improve access to social services
 - Enhancing the quality of service delivery by leveraging, sharing and coordinating use of existing resources, such as aligning youth and grandparent programming
 - Establishing partnerships to develop and implement strategies to expand existing programs/services and/or develop new programming/services to address critical family issues impacting student performance

Highlights of Community’s Next Priorities:

- Identify opportunities to collaborate with existing groups addressing key SE educational objectives: Superintendent’s Community Advisory Committee on Educational Excellence and Communities for Public Education
- Initiate a SE communications campaign to solicit broader committee participation.
- Identify and solicit resources to improve delivery of human services supporting workforce development

Public Safety:

Improve real and perceived levels of public safety and the quality of the built environment through the Rainier Valley.

Public Safety Accomplishments:

- Increased foot patrols and bike patrols in SE Seattle neighborhood business districts, including, Columbia City, Rainier Beach and North Beacon Hill neighborhoods
- Increased community meetings and activities in Othello Park, resulting in less crime and more positive community use of the park
- Increased enforcement at Othello Park and other hot spots
- Initiated Weed & Seed School Truancy program and School Liaison Officer program to engage local youth
- Awarded \$23,000 of Neighborhood Matching Funds to improve Latino community-police relations and to create strong connections between neighbors at NewHolly and Rainier Vista
- Launched the Rainier Corridor Traffic Safety Project, a 35-member community task force to improve safety on Rainier Avenue. Implementation of agreed upon improvements will start summer 2006
- Completed Phase I of the SE Transportation Study, a study to provide a comprehensive, multimodal transportation plan for the next two decades
- Completed design plans for sidewalk and curb improvements to improve pedestrian safety in various locations in SE Seattle
- Constructed three traffic circles to reduce accidents and speeds at 61st Av S/S Norfolk St and 61st Av S/S Cooper St., 13th Av S/S Nevada St.
- Constructed a new walkway at 42 Av S & S Hudson

Highlights of Community’s Next Priorities:

- Increase code enforcement and enact a nuisance ordinance to address businesses that repeatedly fail to comply with City codes
- Extend late-night hours at community recreation centers to engage youth in productive and safe activities
- Emphasize Rainier Avenue as the main street of our business districts

Arts, Culture & Public Space:

Increase arts and cultural opportunities and programs that reflect the Rainier Valley's diverse population and enhance the aesthetic value of public space by integrating arts into all community development strategies, and by promoting collaboration between neighborhood groups (i.e. schools, community centers, neighborhood organizations, and libraries) and local arts organizations.

Arts, Culture & Public Space Accomplishments:

- Made progress on the construction of the Chief Sealth Trail - earthwork 80% completed; paving on the trail 2/3 completed and seeding completed. Street crossings will be constructed during winter '05 and summer '06
- City committed \$290,000 to acquiring the Hillman City P-Patch; community has raised \$32,000 and continues to fundraise
- Developed two new parks: Lake People Park and York Park
- Started improvement plans for Columbia Park, Brighton Playfield, Jefferson Park and Amy Yee Tennis Center
- Received two grants totaling \$285,000 to build a dream playground in conjunction with the \$3.9 million Van Asselt Community Center expansion project
- Completed improvements to the Olmsted Legacy Boulevard and Cheasty Boulevard
- Invested \$71,100 for SE Seattle artists via City's CityArtists program
- Funded three different festivals via the City's Neighborhood Arts Funding Initiative
- Produced Cultural Celebrations Series, Hawaiian-themed teen theatre production, and classical music, jazz, world and traditional performances for SE Seattle families
- Attracted 7,500 people to Columbia City Gallery for art, shopping and learning
- Created four major public artworks for SE Seattle neighborhoods, including a bus shelter and railing installation, mosaic façade, three metal animal banners, and a metal walkway installation
- Launched Public Art Roadmap to facilitate public art projects
- Received funding to revitalize SE Seattle Arts Council as multi-cultural arts advocacy and community planning group
- Convened twenty-four SE Seattle arts and cultural organizations, artists, community members, and school representatives to create local partnerships
- Funded seven neighborhood organizations with Neighborhood Matching Fund awards in excess of \$90,000

Highlights of Community's Next Priorities:

- Continue to bring together local Southeast Seattle arts and cultural organizations, schools, artists, residents and businesses to create collaborations, share resources, and assess needs to develop new and sustain local art programs
- Recruit board members, hire coordinator and create work plan for SESAC
- Appoint SESAC representative to act as liaison with Seattle Design Commission
- Establish roster of resources for public art in SE Seattle by creating list of current public art works in SE, maintenance needs, and organizations and individual with resources, skills and capital
- Continue to bring nationally and regionally recognized artists to Rainier Valley Cultural Center and other community facilities and open spaces

Hit the Beach Program at Rainier Beach High School credit: Adam L. Weintraub



Scene from Ola Na Iwi, Rainier Valley Youth Theatre's production credit: Bradley Enghaus



Hamlet X - Brownbox, African American Theater Company Production credit: William Alan



Enjoying the newly renovated Kubota Gardens



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